

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim February 2002 as American Heart Month. I invite the Governors of the States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, officials of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and the American people to join me in reaffirming our commitment to combating cardiovascular disease and stroke.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-sixth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., February 5, 2002]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 2, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on February 6.

Proclamation 7522—National African American History Month, 2002

February 1, 2002

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During these extraordinary times, America looks forward to new challenges and opportunities with a reinvigorated sense of unity and common purpose. We are a strong and vibrant Nation, thanks to the creativity, fortitude, and resilience of people of every race and background. During National African American History Month, we celebrate the many achievements and contributions made by African Americans to our economic, cultural, spiritual, and political development.

In 1915, Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson founded The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. Through that Association, he began pressing for the establishment of Negro History Week as a way to bring national attention to the accomplish-

ments of African Americans. He hoped to neutralize the apparent distortions in Black history and to provide a more objective and scholarly balance to American and World history.

Dr. Woodson's dream became a reality in 1926. He chose the second week of February for the observance because of its proximity to the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, two individuals whom Dr. Woodson felt had dramatically affected the lives of African Americans. And in 1976, the Association succeeded in expanding the observance, which then became Black History Month.

The theme of National African American History Month for 2002 is "The Color Line Revisited: Is Racism Dead?" The observance calls our Nation's attention to the continued need to battle racism and to build a society that fully lives up to its democratic ideals. This commitment includes ensuring a high-quality education for all Americans, so that no child is left behind, and challenges us to continue to rebuild and restore our communities, to fight crime and violence, and to pursue equal opportunity and equal justice in every part of our society. At the same time, the United States must look beyond its borders and take an active role in helping to alleviate poverty, stimulate economic growth and trade, enhance democracy, and combat HIV/AIDS in Africa.

This annual event gives all Americans a chance to recognize and commemorate the global history of people of African descent. As we celebrate National African American History Month, I join with all Americans in celebrating our diverse heritage and culture and continuing our efforts to create a world that is more just, peaceful, and prosperous for all.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim February 2002 as National African American History Month. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, and all of the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities that highlight and

honor the myriad contributions of African Americans.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-sixth.

George W. Bush

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The President's Radio Address *February 2, 2002*

Good morning. In my State of the Union Address, I committed our Nation to three great goals: To win the war; to secure our homeland; and to defeat the recession.

In recent days, we have heard some encouraging reports on our progress and our work to defeat the recession. But many workers have lost their jobs and their retirement savings when their companies went bankrupt. Employees who have worked hard and saved all their lives should not have to risk losing everything if their company fails, so my administration is proposing important safeguards to our pension laws to protect the retirement savings of workers.

First, we want to give workers greater freedom to diversify their retirement portfolios. Many companies require their workers to hold company shares long after their workers wish to sell, even when the company's shares are dramatically dropping in value. I propose that workers be permitted to sell company-contributed shares in their retirement account and diversify after they have participated in a 401(k) for 3 years.

Next, we need to make sure that companies have a single standard for their executives and their employees. It is unfair for workers to be denied the ability to sell stock when executives are free to sell their stock. Right now, though, companies can create what are called blackouts, when they switch the management of their retirement accounts

from one investment firm to another. During the switch, employees don't have access to their 401(k)s and can't buy or sell. These blackouts usually happen because the company is looking for better service for its employees. But when employees can't sell, executives shouldn't be able to sell, either, so I am proposing that company executives be prohibited from selling any and all of their stock during these blackout periods.

Third, workers should be informed in advance that a blackout period is coming. Under my administration's reforms, workers must be given 30 days' notice before employers make any changes that would stop them from selling their stock.

Fourth, companies will be put on notice when employees are blacked out; company executives with power over 401(k)s will be held accountable for treating their workers' assets as carefully as they treat their own.

Fifth, workers should have the benefit of solid, independent investment advice. Right now, the law deters companies from providing employees with sound advice such as information about the benefits of diversification, and that doesn't make sense. We need to encourage companies to provide workers good advice, not punish them for doing so.

And finally, employers should be required to provide regular information to their workers about the current value of their accounts and their right to sell and diversify. Right now, employers need to give an accounting to workers only once a year. We're going to tell them they must do so every 3 months. These measures will be a major benefit for American workers and for America's employers.

Our country's employers welcome the highest standards of conduct, because high standards are good for business and good for America. I thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2:40 p.m. on February 1 at Camp David, MD, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 2. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 1 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.